

# **Lost Tribes and Sunken Continents: Pseudoarchaeology and Why It Matters**

**ANT2149**

**University of Florida**

**Syllabus Spring 2020**

Mondays Period 6 (12:50-1:40pm)

Wednesdays Periods 6-7 (12:50-2:45pm)

MAEA 0303

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:30-4:30pm or by appointment

## **Course Description**

This course examines claims, popularized in the media, that mysterious archaeological sites, statues, etc. were influenced by outer space visitors. Case studies to be discussed include Stonehenge, various pyramids, Easter Island, Atlantis and Mu, the Nazca Lines, and other archaeological “mysteries.” Emphasis will be placed on understanding how and why pseudoscientific beliefs proliferate, and on understanding the real archaeological histories of ancient peoples.

## **Course Objectives**

This course will provide students with the skills to do the following:

- Describe and explain how the past is reconstructed through archaeology
- Analyze how the past is presented in the media
- Critique narratives that privilege “alien” explanations for the achievements of indigenous peoples

## **Required Text/Readings**

Feder, Kenneth. *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology*. Oxford University Press, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2017.

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

## **Course Requirements**

See course schedule (last two pages of syllabus) for exam dates and other due dates.

**1. Readings:** Reading assignments for the course are listed on the course schedule. Please note that readings are subject to change. You should complete each reading assignment PRIOR to the lecture for which it is assigned. All non-textbook readings will be found on Canvas.

**2. Quiz (50 points – 10% of total):** There will be one quiz that will cover materials presented in both lectures and the readings. The quiz will be worth 50 pts. Quizzes that are missed can only be made up with convincing evidence of a valid excuse (medical/emergency).

**3. Written Exercise (100 points – 20% of total):** There will be one short paper worth 100 points which will cover pseudoarchaeology in the news. You must turn in the assignment on the assigned due date. Late exercises will not be accepted. Details on the exercise will be provided later in the term.

**4. Exams (250 points – 50% of total):** There will be two exams, each worth 125 points, during the course of the term. Exams that are missed can only be made up with convincing evidence of a valid excuse (medical/emergency). They will cover all portions of this course (lectures, class discussions, and readings). In the event that you have a medical emergency or serious personal problem on a scheduled quiz or exam day, you must make every effort to notify the instructor of your absence PRIOR to the scheduled class time.

**5. Video Responses (100 points – 20% of total):** The class will watch five full-length videos about archaeology in this course. Students will be required to complete an assignment for each, reacting to the video and evaluating the scientific merit for the claims being made. Additional instructions will be given in class. For students who cannot be in class on video days, alternative assignments may be given.

### Attendance Policy

You are expected to be in class each day. I will take attendance 5 times during the semester. These days will be chosen entirely randomly, but will not fall on exam days. Your presence in class during these days will determine whether you receive bonus points, or have points deducted from your grade. If you are absent for \_\_\_\_ days of the five attendance days I will adjust your semester total points according to the following table:

Days absent	Point Adjustment
0-1	+10 bonus points
2-3	No adjustment
4-5	-20 points

### Grades and Grading Policies

Letter grades will not be given out during the semester for exercises or exams. Instead, points will be assigned for each exercise and exam. There will be a total of 500 points possible. Your final grade will be based on the total number of points accumulated, as a percentage of the maximum:

94-100%	468-500 pts.	A
90-93	448-467	A-
87-89	433-447	B+
83-86	413-432	B
80-82	398-412	B-
77-79	383-397	C+
73-76	363-382	C
70-72	348-362	C-
67-69	333-347	D+
63-66	313-332	D
60-62	298-312	D-
<60	297 or less	E

See also <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

**NOTE:** In the event that you have a medical emergency or serious personal or family problem, you must make every effort to notify me of your absence by email. If a valid emergency or medical situation prevents attendance during an exam, or prevents on-time submission of an exercise, an alternative assignment or deadline will be designated. Otherwise, late submissions will not be accepted.

### Cell Phone and Laptop Policy

All cell phones should be turned off during class, and laptops are only permitted for note-taking. Any other use of these technologies during class time (texting, emailing, social media-ing, etc.) is distracting and unprofessional. Students will automatically be penalized ten points for any offense, and will be asked to leave the classroom.

**ADDITIONAL NOTE:** No video/audio recording during class is allowed. If you are having trouble with note-taking or the Powerpoints, please let me know. In addition, posting class notes on publicly-accessible websites is not permitted.

### **Honor Code**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

### **Disability Statement**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Student Evaluations**

Students are expected to (but are not required to) provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

### **Campus Resources**

#### Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

#### Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to [Learningsupport@ufl.edu](mailto:Learningsupport@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints Campus: [https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF\\_Complaints\\_policy.pdf](https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf) On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaintprocess>

**Course Schedule:** Please note that the schedule and readings are subject to change.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome!</b>		
	Jan. 6	Class Introduction	
	Jan. 8	Introduction to Pseudoarchaeology, and an Abbreviated Prehistory of the World	Feder, Ch. 1
<b>2</b>	<b>How Archaeology Works</b>		
	Jan. 13	The Scientific Method	Feder, Ch. 2
	Jan. 15	Intro to Archaeological Methods	
<b>3</b>	<b>Ancient Aliens!</b>		
	Jan. 20	<i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – no class</i>	
	Jan. 22	*Video: Ancient Aliens	Feder, Ch. 9
<b>4</b>	<b>Ancient Aliens!</b>		
	Jan. 27	The Claims	Canvas: S. Bond, "Pseudoarchaeology and the racism behind ancient aliens"
	Jan. 29	Evaluating the Evidence for Aliens ...and Quiz Review	
<b>5</b>	<b>Human Evolution, and a bit about media representation</b>		
	Feb. 3	<b>QUIZ</b>	
	Feb. 5	Evolution	Feder, Ch. 4
<b>6</b>	<b>Big Rocks</b>		
	Feb. 10	Stonehenge, the Pyramids, and Other Amazing Sites	Feder, Ch. 10
	Feb. 12	*Video: Decoding the Great Pyramid	
<b>7</b>	<b>African Archaeology</b>		
	Feb. 17	Great Zimbabwe & Bokoni	
	Feb. 19	Archaeoastronomy and the Pillar Sites	Canvas: S. Kaplan, "This ancient burial ground tells a story of unity in a time of climate chaos"
<b>8</b>	<b>Exam</b>		
	Feb. 24	Exam Review	
	Feb. 26	<b>Exam 1</b>	
<b>9</b>	<i>Spring Break</i>		
	Mar. 2	<i>Spring Break – no class</i>	
	Mar. 4	<i>Spring Break – no class</i>	
<b>10</b>	<b>North American Archaeology, Part I</b>		
	Mar. 9	Who Was First?	Feder, Ch. 5
	Mar. 11	Africans, Vikings, etc. Written Assignment Discussion	Feder, Ch. 6
<b>11</b>	<b>North American Archaeology, Part II</b>		

	Mar. 16	*Video: Myth of the Moundbuilders	Feder, Ch. 7
	Mar. 18	Moundbuilder discussion, Maya archaeology, etc.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Atlantis</b>		
	Mar. 23	Atlantis	Feder, Ch. 8, Canvas: J. Seidel, "The legend of Atlantis has a dark, terrible history"
	Mar. 25	Archaeology as Propaganda	Canvas: B. Arnold, "Pseudoarchaeology and nationalism: Essentializing difference"
<b>13</b>	<b>Pseudoarchaeology in the News</b>		
	Mar. 30	Student Choice!	TBD
	April 1	<b>Written Assignment Due,</b> Presentations/Discussion of pseudoarchaeology in the news	
<b>14</b>	<b>Rapa Nui and Repatriation</b>		
	April 6	Rapa Nui	Canvas: A. Smith, "British Museum's Easter Island statue reignites debate about colonial plundering"
	April 8	*Video: Mystery of Easter Island	
<b>15</b>	<b>Bodies</b>		
	April 13	Mummies and Giants and Ethics	Feder, Ch. 3
	April 15	*Video: Legends of the Lost	
<b>16</b>	<b>Wrap-Up</b>		
	April 20	Roanoke and other enduring mysteries	
	April 22	Wrap-up, Exam Review	
<b>17</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>		
	<b>WEDNESDAY, April 29th</b>	<b>12:30-2:30pm, MAEA 0303</b>	